

MARINE CORPS LANCE CORPORAL DYLAN R. MEROLA, 20,
OF RANCHO CUCAMONGA, CALIFORNIA

Lance Corporal Dylan R. Merola had only been in Afghanistan for a little over a week, his mother told CBS Los Angeles.

"He was supposed to come home in a couple of weeks," said a loved one.

The Los Osos High School graduate planned to go to college and study engineering. He was honored at his alma mater's first football game of the season.

"One of the best kids ever," his mother, Cheryl Merola, said. "Kind, loving . . . he would give anything for anybody."

MARINE CORPS LANCE CORPORAL KAREEM M. NIKOUI, 20,
OF NORCO, CALIFORNIA

Kareem M. Nikoui attended Norco High School in 2019 and served in JROTC, CBS Los Angeles reports.

"Just a good kid. Really had a strong energy about him and knew what he wanted to do," Norco High School principal Robert Ibbetson said. "It was neat to see that kind of direction and drive and goal-setting."

He is survived by his mother, father and siblings, the city of Norco confirmed Friday night.

RECOGNIZING THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF CASA OF COLLIN COUNTY

HON. VAN TAYLOR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 10, 2021

Mr. TAYLOR. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Collin County's milestone 30th anniversary of service to the community and to the abused and neglected children of North Texas.

Since its establishment in 1991, CASA has served 100% of the abused and neglected children removed from their homes in Collin County. As the child's official voice in court, these guardian ad litem work tirelessly to champion the best interests of the children they serve so that they receive needed services while ensuring the child's case moves through the system as quickly as possible. The ultimate goal of CASA is for each child to be reunited with family if appropriate or to be placed in a safe, permanent, and loving home. It is a mission their trained advocates do not take lightly.

CASA's network of trained advocates are often recognized for providing consistent, strong, and clear voices for abused and neglected children as they navigate a complicated legal system. CASA often serves as the only stable, trusted adult in the lives of these children as they navigate the changing dynamics of the foster care system.

Since its inception, CASA has advocated for more than 12,000 children. Further, despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, the dedicated volunteer advocates, exceptional staff, outstanding leadership, and committed Board of Directors and Advisory Board once again rose to meet the needs of those they serve by adapting their processes to provide even greater support through new and innovative ways.

Now as we reflect upon the thirty years of selfless service performed by CASA of Collin County, I ask my colleagues to join me in

thanking the organization and their decades of fierce advocates for changing the lives of countless children in our community.

HONORING THE LIFE OF WILLIAM R. SANCHEZ

HON. JUDY CHU

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 10, 2021

Ms. CHU. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of William R. Sanchez who passed away at the age of 103 on August 23, 2021. Mr. Sanchez was a longtime constituent of mine in Monterey Park, California, and an American patriot who bravely served our country during World War II.

Mr. Sanchez was born on July 18, 1918, in El Paso, Texas, and moved with his family to Los Angeles at the age of one. He graduated from Thomas Jefferson High School in 1938 and immediately joined the Civilian Conservation Corps, where he worked in Northern California managing forests and building roads. He received a boxing scholarship to UCLA, but instead decided to enlist in the U.S. Army in 1940. In search of adventure, Mr. Sanchez chose to serve at Fort Mills on Corregidor Island in the Philippines. He was assigned to Army Intelligence on the island and served on General Douglas MacArthur's staff. While working with Army Intelligence, he helped provide advance notice of the Japanese force on its way to attack Pearl Harbor.

In 1942, Sgt. Sanchez fought in the Battle of Corregidor and was taken as a prisoner of war after keeping the Japanese at bay for five months. Like thousands of other American prisoners of war, he experienced unimaginable atrocities on the Bataan Death March. He was then transferred on a Japanese "hell ship" and taken to Camp Omori near Tokyo, where he was constantly abused, beaten, and underfed. Sgt. Sanchez's mental fortitude helped him endure these brutal conditions for over three years until the end of the war.

After the war, he returned to the U.S. and attended Woodbury College where he earned his bachelor's degree. He then went on to earn a master's degree in International Trade and Finance from USC. He started his own company, Belenco, and became one of the biggest importers and suppliers of rolled steel products on the West Coast. Mr. Sanchez settled with his family in Monterey Park in 1958 and took an active role in the community. Over the years, he remained active in the veteran community, serving as the keynote speaker at many veterans forums, and offering advice and support to countless veterans and their families on their benefits and rights.

William Sanchez was truly a hero of our time. He leaves behind an enduring legacy of service and sacrifice to our nation, and that is why it is my distinct honor to commemorate his life.

HONORING THE LIFE OF L.D. "JACK" GRIFFIN

HON. BRIAN BABIN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 10, 2021

Mr. BABIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of L.D. "Jack" Griffin, who passed away on Saturday, July 24, 2021, at the age of 94.

On April 11, 1927, Jack was born in Monroe, Louisiana, to Sam and Alma Lee Mullican Griffin. He married Myra Collier, and they spent 68 years together. Jack and Myra were blessed with two children, Ky and Leeza.

Jack patriotically served our country in the United States Navy during World War II. He was a longtime resident of Tyler County and continued to faithfully serve his community as a member of the First Baptist Church of Woodville. Jack was also a part of the Magnolia Masonic Lodge No. 495 in Woodville. As a Mason, he attained the 32nd Degree, an honor bestowed for his outstanding service. He was also a member of the El Mina Shrine in Galveston, Texas.

Jack traveled the world as a pipeliner. His specialty was in water crossings. Jack skillfully engineered and constructed pipelines in Straits of Mackinac, the Puget Sound, the Straits of Gibraltar, and many places in between. Jack retired as Director of Field Services with Williams Companies based in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Jack is remembered as one who loved his family and looked forward to being amused and entertained at their regular gatherings. In the words of Henry David Thoreau, he went confidently in the direction of his dreams, living a life more than he imagined. Even though he worked all over the world, he said of his beloved Woodville, "It may not have been where I intended to go, but I think I ended up where I needed to be."

Jack is survived by his wife, Myra Griffin of Woodville; son, Ky D. Griffin and wife Rhonda of Jasper; daughter, Leeza Blanchette and husband Jacques of Woodville; grandchildren, Blake Blanchette and wife Helen of Sinton, Megan Parmer and husband Randy of The Woodlands, Brent Blanchette of Woodville, Blaire Rogers and husband Dwight of North Palm Beach, Florida and husband Collier Griffin of Chicago, Illinois; great-grandchildren, Caroline, Libby, and Ellie Blanchette, Emerson Parmer, and Sutton, Quint, and Griffin Rogers; sisters-in-law, Carolyn Collier of Goldsboro, North Carolina and Judy Sheffield of Houston; nieces, Kim Nagypal and husband Bela of Woodville, Tammy Bohannon of Allen, and Cristi Connor and husband Paul of Houston. Jack was preceded in death by his parents, Sam and Alma Griffin, and his brother-in-law Malcolm Collier.

Madam Speaker, I honor my friend Jack Griffin as one of the last members of the Greatest Generation. His faithful service to our country and his community will not be forgotten, and my heartfelt prayers remain with his family and friends during this difficult time.

HONORING SIOUX FALLS LITTLE
LEAGUE BASEBALL TEAM

HON. DUSTY JOHNSON

OF SOUTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 10, 2021

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the members of the Sioux Falls Little League baseball team, who represented the great State of South Dakota in the 2021 Little League World Series.

Sioux Falls had a remarkable season placing fourth after a truly amazing series of victories. Through their hard work and perseverance, they have become the most successful Little League team in South Dakota history. They are also the first team in the history of the Little League World Series ever to pitch four no-hitters.

During their historic Little League World Series run, this team has shown incredible determination, teamwork, and resiliency. So many South Dakotans truly enjoyed following along and cheering on the hometown team. I, along with the entire State of South Dakota, am proud of them for this outstanding accomplishment and for representing our State on the national stage.

My sincerest congratulations to Easton, Hayden, Noah, Alex, Gunnar, Beau, Kye, Boston, Sam, Brayson, Jacksyn, Opland, Gavin, Cason, Maddux, and Brekken, as well as Coach Mike, Coach Jeff, Coach Devin, and Coach Ryan. I commend each one of you on your success, and I look forward to seeing what great things you will accomplish in the future.

IN RECOGNITION OF JOSE "JOE"
ARCE AND THE TWENTY-FIFTH
ANNIVERSARY OF KANSAS
CITY'S HISPANIC NEWS

HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 10, 2021

Mr. CLEAVER. Madam Speaker, it is my honor to rise today to recognize and celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Kansas City Hispanic News, a weekly bilingual newspaper published and owned by Jose "Joe" Arce, that has continuously served the Greater Kansas City community in Missouri's Fifth Congressional District. Since its creation, the Kansas City Hispanic News has helped bridge the gap with the Latino community by offering representation on a mainstream paper. Wholly devoted to establishing top quality media coverage via in-depth stories in both Spanish and English, Arce and his publication have made a monumental impact on the Latino community.

The Kansas City Hispanic News opened its door in 1996 along Southwest Boulevard, located in Kansas City's Westside neighborhood, a community heavily influenced by Latino and Mexican American roots. Through investigative reporting and providing community members with stories in two languages, the weekly newspaper has increased its coverage to extend beyond the state line into Kansas, showing the impact on Latino households. With this newspaper, Arce has provided

a platform for Latinos to be represented, informed, and engaged as local businessowners through advertising opportunities, giving the Latino community a place to flourish and thrive.

Born and raised in Kansas City's West Side, Arce always felt in touch with his Mexican roots and Latino background. Before he started the bilingual newspaper, he worked as a photojournalist and reporter for WDAF-TV Fox 4 News, dedicating himself to serving the people in his community through journalism. After years of experience, Arce realized the lack of representation and reporting catered to the Latino population and took it upon himself to start a paper that could inform and celebrate the accomplishments of the Latino community. As an involved civic leader, Arce used the bilingual paper as a vehicle of information on important topics that affected Latinos such as elections, workers' rights, local businesses, and celebrations. His efforts allowed people to feel connected to not only their roots but to their local community and offered access to information for those who were only Spanish speakers.

While the Kansas City Hispanic News is one of his most influential additions to the Fifth District, Arce's contributions extend beyond journalism. As an active civic leader, Arce has served on boards for numerous organizations such as the Guadalupe Centers and the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Greater Kansas City. Additionally, Arce was one of the key figures in the distinguished victory of renaming 23rd Street in the Westside Neighborhood in Kansas City, Missouri to Avenida Cesar Chavez after activist Cesar Chavez in 1993. To increase representation and local celebrations related to Latino and Mexican American traditions, Arce helped expand Fiesta Hispana KC, an annual festival held in Kansas City to celebrate Mexico's Independence Day as well as Hispanic Heritage Month.

Through this festival, community members have been able to partake in the celebration that brings music, food, dance, and local businesses, further connecting the Latino community as well as providing others to learn more about Latino culture. Arce is known to be a friend, mentor, and a loyal supporter of youth journalists. To help Latino students pursuing journalism, Arce founded the Hispanic Media Association, which provides scholarships. Furthermore, Arce served as the chair of the Cesar E. Chavez committee at the University of Central Missouri for 15 years where he focused on finding ways to attract Latino students to the campus. Arce's unwavering devotion and tireless commitment to serve and better the Latino community is a testament of his compassionate and caring nature.

Madam Speaker, please join me in recognizing and thanking Joe Arce and the Kansas City's Hispanic News for all they have done for Kansas City and Missouri's Fifth Congressional District in the last twenty-five years. I am honored to have someone like Arce, a champion of public service and civic leader, in Missouri's Fifth Congressional District which I represent. His immense impact on the Latino community and Kansas City will continue to be felt for years to come. Let us celebrate Joe Arce's job well done and wish him many more years of success.

CELEBRATING EPIC'S 70TH BIRTH-
DAY OF SERVICE TO THE COM-
MUNITY

HON. CHERI BUSTOS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 10, 2021

Mrs. BUSTOS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate EPIC's 70th Birthday of empowering and inspiring people with disabilities through the services and support they provide to the community.

EPIC offers a range of programs and services to help individuals with disabilities with educational, residential, employment, and care-taking resources. EPIC was founded in 1950, and began as a group of Peoria-area parents who wanted to provide their special needs children with education and opportunity. These parents decided to open a school in 1957, and what started out as an organization to help 10 children has now helped over 600 individuals with intellectual disabilities, cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, autism, epilepsy, and other intellectual or developmental disabilities. I commend EPIC for its work in the Peoria community, and I thank the management and staff for their dedication to helping people with intellectual disabilities.

It is because of strong organizations such as EPIC that I am especially proud to serve Illinois' 17th Congressional District. Madam Speaker, I would like to again formally congratulate EPIC on its 70th Birthday.

A PIECE OF GLASS, IN MEMORY
OF THOMAS BUTLER OF SQUAD
ONE

HON. ANDREW R. GARBARINO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 10, 2021

Mr. GARBARINO. Madam Speaker, I rise today with a poetic tribute in honor of Thomas Butler and his father, William. I presented to his family on the day of his funeral after his father had given me a piece of glass from the World Trade Center where Thomas died. I include in the RECORD this poem, penned by Albert Caswell.

A PIECE OF GLASS

(by Albert Carey Caswell)

A Father and a Hero who raised a fine son
A man who dedicated his entire life to saving
others this one
As too his fine son's life journey had just
begun
His little boy,
his pride and joy
as one day too he'd follow his father's most
courageous footsteps his son
And try as he may,
this most splendid of all men who so many
had saved,
could not but save his own most precious of
all ones
A piece of glass now in my hands
As once before stood so very grand
Within your two great Twin Towers,
gracing this fair city throughout all the
hours
as high above a majestic skyline you ran
With your twin bright beacons of hope,
and your islands of ingenuity and determina-
tion to all hearts spoke